



## **National Commission on the Future of the Army**

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000  
Arlington, VA 22202

**SUBJECT:** National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA), Operational Sub-Committee Engagement with Military Attaché Federal Republic of Germany Minutes

**Date:** 21 September 2015

**Time:** 1500-1600

**Location:** Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20036

**Format:** Round table discussion with senior allied official

**Attendees:**

HON Kathleen Hicks, Commissioner

Mr. Scott Sharp, NCFA staff

Colonel (GS) Horst Busch, Military Attaché, Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany

**Documents Submitted to Commission:** None

**Meeting Summary**

The Commission continues to meet with allied and partner nations to capture their perspectives as the United States balances the size and mix of the Army. The Commission is cognizant that the security interests of the United States and those of its partners and allies are often linked. Engaging key allies to understand their perspectives in balancing national security risk in light of declining defense resources is an important element of the Commission's deliberative effort.

Late scheduling changes precluded the participation of appointed Designated Federal Officer. The meeting began at 1500hrs with Mr. Sharp informing COL Busch that the conversation and all Commission activities are subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the Sunshine Act. He further explained information gathered will be made publically available. Commissioner Hicks and COL Busch discussed the following topics:

1. Regional Security: COL Busch articulated the German perspective of the need to simultaneously work with Russia for solutions to regional security challenges and maintain a strong defense. Key to this strong defense approach is demonstrated US leadership in NATO and NATO exercises and activities that demonstrate credible deterrent capability.

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2. Interoperability: Challenges and opportunities exist for interoperability and interdependence between US and allied forces. Pragmatic limitations of German and other European capabilities were discussed in detail. Political and policy limitations constrain achievable savings if each nation must be prepared to operate independently. NATO standards have enduring utility in helping ensure interoperability within a given nation's constraints. All German combat forces are permanently assigned to a multinational structure. Conducting training for partner nations has the benefit of helping German Soldiers master skills while offering an institutional incentive for German units to participate in building partner capacity.

3. U.S. forces in Germany: There is a discernable, qualitative difference in ally assurance between forward stationed forces and forward presence provided by rotational forces. German Army formations cannot be integrated into rotational forces and that limits opportunities to build lasting relationships with rotational partner militaries.

4. U.S. capabilities of particular interest to Germany: Missile Defense and Short Range Air Defense Artillery are key US Army capabilities even though these assets fall under Air Force responsibility in Germany's structure. Also cited as major interest US capabilities were Army aviation (particularly the ability to mass capability), ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) and US Air Force Close Air Support.

COL Busch is open to subsequent discussions to ensure the Commission has any information required.

The meeting adjourned at 1600 hrs.